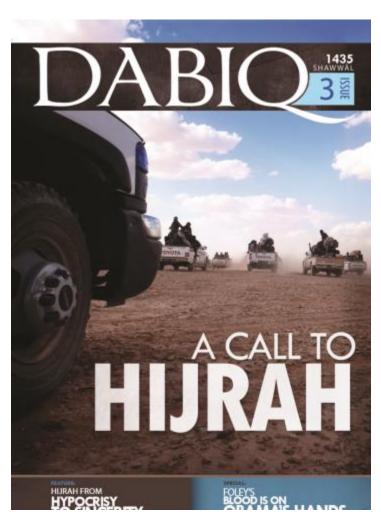
Dabiq issue 3 part 1- Hijrah

[by **Charles Cameron** -- a pilgrimage with no return -- IS as the victorious group, the saved sect, the strangers]

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Hijrah is emigration for religious purposes, pilgrimage on a one-way ticket, and the archetypal Hijrah, that which was made by the Prophet and his followers from Mecca to Medina in 622, gives the Islamic calendar its starting date. The Islamic State has dedicated the third issue of *Dabiq* to the topic of hijrah, viewed in the shade of the Prophet's hijrah as the emigration of Muslims from around the world to participate among the forces of the "caliphate" in the final jihad:

Contemplate – may Allah have mercy upon you – the states that existed throughout history, both the Muslim states and the mushrik states. Were any of them established by the emigration of poor strangers from the East and the West, who then gathered in an alien land of war and pledged allegiance to an "unknown" man, in spite of the political, economic, military, media, and intelligence war waged by the nations of the world against their religion, their state, and their hijrah? And in spite of the fact that they did not have any common "nationality," ethnicity, language, or worldly interests, nor did they have any prior acquaintance!

This phenomenon is something that has never occurred in human history, except in the case of the Islamic State! And nothing like it will ever occur thereafter except in relation to it; and Allah knows best.

and:

But if you were to go to the frontlines of ar-Raqqah, al-Barakah, al-Khayr, Halab, etc., you would find the soldiers and the commanders to be of different colors, languages, and lands: the Najdi, the Jordanian, the Tunisian, the Egyptian, the Somali, the Turk, the Albanian, the Chechen, the Indonesian, the Russian, the European, the American and so on. They left their families and their lands to renew the state of the muwahhidin in Sham, and they had never known each other until they arrived in Sham!

Having stressed the uniqueness of the Islamic State in this way, the writer then makes it clear that this unique event is happening precisely because we are in the tun-up to the final battle:

I have no doubt that this state, which has gathered the bulk of the muhajirin [ie: those who have made hijrah] in Sham and has become the largest collection of muhajirin in the world, is a marvel of history that has only come about to pave the way for al-Malhamah al-Kubra (the grand battle prior to the Hour). And Allah knows best.

and:

And what a tremendous favor it is from Allah to guide one to the Islamic State and grant him companionship with its muhajirin, those who plunge into the malahim (the great battles prior to the Hour)!

Not surprisingly, therefore, significance is given to the location of the Islamic State in Greater Sham. A major section is headed:

Sham is the Land of Malahim

and in it, we read:

Then, these nuzza' gathered in Sham, the land of malahim and the land of al-Malhamah al-Kubra. Allah's Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) has informed of battles that will occur in places within Sham and its vicinity, such as al-Ghutah, Damascus, Dabiq

(or al-A'maq), the Euphrates River, and Constantinople (which is near Sham), as well as Baytul-Maqdis (Jerusalem), the gate of Lod, Lake Tiberius, the Jordan River, Mount Sinai, and so on.

The immediately following sentence, as <u>Tim Furnish pointed out</u>, contains the first explicit reference to the **Mahdi** in an issue of *Dabiq*:

And he (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) linked this blessed land with many of the events related to al-Masih, al-Mahdi, and the Dajjal.

The following hadith detailing the site of the final battle — compare **Har Megiddo** in Christian scripture — is then quoted:

Abud-Darda' (radiyallAhu 'anh) said that Allah's Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "Indeed the camp of the Muslims on the day of al-Malhamah al-Kubra will be in al-Ghutah, next to a city called Damascus, one of the best cities of Sham" [sahih – reported by Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawud, and al-Hakim].

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The group of foreigners from around the world coming to al-Sham is also described as "strangers" — a term with its own reference both to the earliest companions and to the latest among fighters in the final battle:

Ibn Mas'ud (radiyallahu 'anh) said that the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, "Verily Islam began as something strange, and it will return to being something strange as it first began, so glad tidings to the strangers." Someone asked, "Who are the strangers?" He said, "Those who break off from their tribes" [reported by Imam Ahmad, ad-Darimi, and Ibn Majah, with a sahih isnad].

The earliest Muslims were strange because they were few among their fellow-tribespeople of Mecca, the latest because they are a comparatively small vanguard — favorite term of bin Laden's — among all those hundreds of millions who today call themselves Muslims — but also and specifically because they come from "strange" lands. There's even an echo of I Peter 2.9 in the New Testament here:

But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

Think also of John 15,16:

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.

And indeed of Israel in the Torah, eg D'varim / Deuteronomy 14.2:

For thou art a holy people unto HaShem thy G-d, and HaShem hath chosen thee to be His own treasure out of all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.

In all of these verses, the sense of "chosenness" is almost palpable: IS is strumming an ancient and powerful chord here.

But what does it mean, in a specifically Islamic and apocalyptic context, to be "strange" and "chosen" in this way? Another paragraph from *Dabiq* gives us further insight:

Shaykh Hamid at-Tuwayjiri (rahimahullah), in commenting on some of the narrations about the tribulations and battles in Sham, said, "In these narrations is evidence that the bulk of at-Ta'ifatul-Mansurah (the victorious group) will be in Sham near the end of times, because the Khilafah will be there. They will continue to be there clearly upon the truth until ...

I'll leave the "until" for later, and simply report some ahadith here that concern the "victorious group" and the "saved sect":

It was reported from 'Awf ibn Maalik who said: the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

"The Jews were divided into seventy-one sects, one of which is in Paradise and seventy are in the Fire. The Christians were divided into seventy-two sects, seventy-one of which are in the Fire and one is in Paradise. By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, my Ummah will be divided into seventy-three sects, one of which will be in Paradise and seventy-two will be in the Fire." It was said, O Messenger of Allaah, who are they? He said, "Al-Jamaa'ah." [Sunan Ibn Maajah, no. 3982]

That's one of numerous variants on the same message. And another hadith connects the "victorious group" specifically with the "saved sect" thus:

They are in this world "The Victorious Group" [at-Taa'ifah al-Mansoorah] and in the hereafter "The Saved Sect". [al-Firqah an-Naajiyyah]

Furthermore, Muhammad ibn al-Uthaymin, in his <u>Methodology (Minhaaj) of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah</u> makes the connection with the end times explicit:

There will always be a group of my Ummah victorious upon the truth, until the last of them fight against Ad-Dajjal.

Abu Dawud 3:11, cited in Tafsir Ibn Kathir: (abridged) Vol 9 p.88

The foreign fighters, then, will be strangers because foreigners, strange because they will be few compared to the masses of the indifferent and quiescent, select, victorious, saved, "on the truth" — they will be a "vanguard" and also a "remnant" — participating on the field of battle during the battles leading up to the final great Battle of the End Times.

Again, this is a powerful chord to strike in the hearts of the young, the uncritical — those who got in search of jihad in al-Sham, buying copies of *Islam for Dummies* before they leave..

So those who left their tribes – the best of Allah's slaves – rallied together with an imam and a jama'ah upon the path of Ibrahim. They gathered together in the land of malahim shortly before the occurrence of al-Malhamah al-Kubra, announced their enmity and hatred for the cross worshippers, the apostates, their crosses, their borders, and their ballotboxes, and pledged allegiance to the Khilafah, promising to die defending it.

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Hold on, there are two more matters in this first take on *Dabiq* issue 3 that I'd like to mention, one having to do with faith and the unseen, the other with something not unlike current dispensationalist notions of the Rapture.

As to faith, *Dabiq* notes:

Allah has praised the believers for their belief in the unseen, as He said, {They believe in the unseen} [Al-Baqarah: 3]. The companions of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) believed in both what they witnessed and what they could not see, for they believed in Allah and the Day of Judgment without seeing either of them, and they believed in the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) having seen and witnessed him. The revelation would descend [upon him] in their company, and they would see the signs and witness the miracles.

Taking up the comparative mode again, there are echoes here of Hebrews 11.1:

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

and John 20.29:

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

It's my understanding that Muhammad would have been acquainted with Nestorian Christian monks, one of whom predicted his prophethood. Just how their "one person, two natures" theology and / or scriptures may have influenced him (and his teachings on the crucifixion in particular) I don't know, but would certainly be interested to learn...

So.. *Dabiq* continues with more in this same line of ahadith, once again tying in the last days of the victorious group with the first days of the Companions and earliest generations of Islam:

The last part of this ummah believes in what the first part of the ummah believed in of the unseen, and believes in what the first part of the ummah believed in as eyewitnesses. This latter belief is their belief in the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), for they do not see the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and because of that they've become the

most wondrous people in faith, as reported [in the hadith] of Ibn 'Abbas (radiyallahu 'anhuma) that Allah's Messenger (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, 'The most wondrous people in faith are a people who come after me and believe in me without having seen me, and they attest to my truthfulness without having seen me. So they are my brothers' [reported by Imam Ahmad]" [Ma'ani al-Akhbar].

Once again, powerful and ancient memes are given a new and powerful interpretation and application.

The second point has to do with a divine force that lifts the righteous above the fray, so that only those who have earned some measure of divine wrath remain on earth — shades of the Rapture as described in the *Left Behind* series!

As you may recall, up above, I quoted:

They will continue to be there clearly upon the truth until ..

and said I would pick up the sentence later. The whole sentence reads:

They will continue to be there clearly upon the truth until Allah sends the pleasant breeze and it takes the soul of every person who has faith in his heart, as preceded in the sahih narrations that the Prophet (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said, 'Until the command of Allah comes while they are upon that [condition]'" [Ithaful-Jama'ah].

This is certainly another strong apocalyptic meme — the physical and / or metaphysical safeguarding of the faithful few in a time of wrath and destruction. And *Dabiq* hammers it home repeatedly:

In another narration, "So it [the breeze] grasps them under their armpits, taking the soul of every believer and every Muslim. And there will remain the worst of the people, having intercourse as donkeys do [in front of other people as they watch]. So it is upon them that the Hour will be established" [Sahih Muslim].

And in another narration, "Allah will send a cold breeze from the direction of Sham, so no one will remain on the face of the earth with so much as the weight of a mustard seed of goodness or faith in his heart except that it takes him. Even if one of you were to enter into the center of a mountain, the breeze would enter into it, until it takes him. Then there will remain the worst of the people, who have the agility of birds (in their haste to commit evil and satisfy their lusts) and the wits of vicious, predatory animals (in their hostility and oppression of one another). They do not know any good, nor do they denounce any evil" [Sahih Muslim].

This pleasant breeze takes the souls of the believers everywhere on the earth: al-Hijaz, Iraq, Yemen, Sham, and so on. It will be sent forth a number of years after the demise of the Dajjal and the passing away of the Masih 'Isa (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (rahimahullah) said, "Islam in the end of times will be more manifest in Sham. [..] So the best of the people on the earth in the end of times will be those who keep to the land of Ibrahim's hijrah, which is Sham" [Majmu'ul-Fatawa].

I'm not as impressed as others by the supposed "slickness" of the magazine, but the argumentation as illustrated here deserves careful consideration and appropriate rebuttal from qualified scholars.

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That concludes page 10 of this 42 page magazine. Whether I'll post more on the remaining pages remains to be seen. And no doubt there are strands that I have missed here, which Tim Furnish may address.